

Alaska Procurement Connection

A Monthly Newsletter From Your Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

SBA Seeks Comments on WOSB Program

Contributed by Megan Luna (anmcl1@uaa.alaska.edu)

Between 1997 and 2002 the growth rate in the number of women-owned small business (WOSB) was almost twice that of all firms; however, WOSBs have not received a commensurate increase in their share of Federal contracting dollars. Currently, the U.S. Small Business Administration is proposing to amend its regulations regarding its government contracting programs to add a new part that will implement the WOSB Federal Contract Assistance Program. July 17, 2006 is the deadline for comments on this proposed change.

The WOSB setaside program is a government contracting issue that has been simmering for more than ten years. In 1996 legislation was passed, setting a 5 percent WOSB contracting goal for Federal agencies. Further legislation in 2000 was passed adding section 8(m) to the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 2000, Public Law 106-554. This legislation authorized contracting officers to restrict competition to eligible WOSBs for certain Federal contracts in industries in which SBA had determined WOSB were underrepresented. SBA delayed implementing this program and the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce subsequently sued SBA to prompt action, and won.

Since then, SBA has issued a proposed ruling that will formalize the Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contract Assistance Program. "The purpose of the proposed rule is to create an initial framework and infrastructure for implementing this new program, thereby providing a tool Federal agencies may eventually use to increase Federal contracting to WOSBs," according to the Federal Register release. Specifically, the proposed ruling addresses definitions of WOSB and Economically Disadvantaged WOSB (EDWOSB), the eligibility requirements for the WOSB/EDWOSB program, the certification process required, and the tools contracting officers may use to issue contracts under this program.

For complete text for this proposed rule access the website referenced below. To provide input, submit your comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmpublic/component/main> (search for "SBA-2006-0128") or email Linda Waters at linda.waters@sba.gov (including RIN 3245-AE65 in the subject line) on or before July 17, 2006. Other options for submitting comment are listed in the Federal Register proposed rule text.

For full text for this proposed rule, access:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/pdf/06-5354.pdf>

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Check out the PTAC Calendar of Events for Upcoming Opportunities!

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A Program of:



University of Alaska
Small Business
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Doing Business with the USCG

Contributed by Robert Brunett (anreb2@uaa.alaska.edu)

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) procurement organization operates on a decentralized system. There are two large procurement organizations which operate independently, and are known as Maintenance & Logistics Command Atlantic (MLCATL) and Maintenance & Logistics Command Pacific (MLCPAC).

For MLCPAC, which includes Alaska, there are six contracting offices on the West Coast that procure goods and services valued up to and over \$100,000. The names and addresses for the six MLCPAC procurement offices and the typical items each office procures can be found at: http://www.uscg.mil/mlcpac/mlcp/mlcf/doing_business_with_mlcp.htm#TOP

The Integrated Support Commands (ISCs) are the USCG's centers of excellence for Simplified Acquisitions Procedure procurements and each ISC has contracting authority up to \$50,000. Although any federal procurement greater than \$25,000 will be posted to FedBizOpps and competed in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the USCG Small Business Specialist recommends companies in Alaska that desire to do business with the USCG contact their local ISC, send a summary of business qualifications, and ask to be added to the appropriate ISC source list. For many of the USCG purchases less than \$25,000, the assigned purchasing officer solicits businesses directly, using a source list that is comprised from the GSA catalog or previous vendors.

There are two offices located in Alaska—the ISC Ketchikan and ISC Kodiak. ISC Ketchikan and ISC Kodiak provide Health and Safety, Personnel Services, Facilities and Industrial Engineering, and Comptroller support to all USCG units in Central and Eastern Alaska. Throughout their appropriate areas of responsibility the ISC provides support services for all USCG units in Alaska to include: Industrial Support Activity services, Group Engineer Naval Engineering functions (Patrol Boats (WPB's) and standard boats), and Force Optimization & Training support. The ISCs are responsible for acquiring goods and services that exceed the contracting authority of the units within the ISC's area of responsibility.

Often a purchasing officer will use a local source listing to access your company information, and when that is not available they will search other marketing options, such as CCR or the Dynamic Small Business Search. To have your business included on a local source list with the

ISC please contact one or both of the agencies below with a copy of your business profile and summary of qualifications. A follow-up phone call with the buyer is appropriate to ensure your company's information has been added. For additional assistance, contact PTAC.

- ISC Ketchikan (Phone: 907-463-2117)
1300 Stedman Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
- ISC Kodiak (Phone: 907-487-5180)
P.O. Box 195000, Kodiak, AK 99615-5000

EC/EDI Corner

Contributed by Mary Wheeler (fnmaw@uaf.edu)

Acquisition Central

Acquisition Central is a “one-stop-shopping center” for the acquisition community and its government business partners. This recently redesigned site makes it easier to find information sources that relate to doing business with the federal government. There are links on the home page of particular use to the business community to include CCR and FBO, among others. Other links include items for users to learn more about the IAE system, news, and events. One link all vendors should follow is called “For Sellers.” These links provide assistance for business development, business opportunities, registration, and reporting. And, if you need assistance with the eSRS (the electronic Subcontracting Reporting System) there is a link to the system from the Acquisition Central website to the eSRS website.

— <http://www.acquisition.gov>

READYBusiness

READYBusiness is a Department of Homeland Security website that covers how to stay in business during emergencies. Topics include preparedness, communication with and between employees, and building safety. This website provides posters and brochures, checklists, and templates for downloading.

— <http://www.ready.gov/business/index.html>

CCR Update

If you are having difficulty accessing CCR to complete updates, check the notices for scheduled maintenance that are posted on the CCR website (<http://www.ccr.gov>). If maintenance is not the problem, go to <http://www.bpn.gov>, click on Release Notes, and review changes that have taken place that may be affecting your registration. There have been six updates since the start of 2006 that may affect your CCR registration. If you still have problems, call your local PTAC office.

New E-Requirement for Some SBIR Submissions

Contributed by Carolyn Pratt (ancap1@uaa.alaska.edu)

In an effort to streamline the submission of Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) proposals, several agencies have their own electronic submission process like NSF's Fastlane. However, others are turning to Grants.gov as the vehicle for SBIR proposal submissions and you must register on the site in order to prepare and submit a proposal to that agency. Completing the registration requires a DUNS number, registering in CCR, and establishing an MPIN. If you don't know what these are, the Alaska PTAC offers a "10 Steps to Government Contracting" workshop that explains how to complete these requirements. Check <http://www.ptacalaska.org> for an upcoming date or call TREND for assistance.

Companies that are considering an SBIR proposal submission are encouraged to begin the Grants.gov registration process. This is a one-time registration process; however, it can take as much as one month to complete and requires several steps. To register, go to the <http://www.grants.gov> homepage, and click on the "Applying for Grants" link and then on the "click here" in the section titled "Remember to Register Before You Apply."

Once you've completed the registration, you will be ready to apply for the grant. It is strongly advised that you not delay this either. As the submission deadline approaches, there will be a lot of activity on the website. You can avoid the "traffic jams" if you finalize your proposal several days prior to the due date.

First, download the application package and instructions. You will need the funding opportunity number identifying the SBIR grant application since there will be forms that are unique to each federal agency. Second, complete the application. You can do this offline which allows you flexibility in where and when you work on it and enables you to easily review sections as you complete them. Everything you need to know is included in the application package and instructions. The third step is to submit the grant application package. You will then need to log into Grants.gov using the username and password you entered when you registered with a Credential Provider to submit the application. Step four is to check the status of your submission. You can identify your application by Funding Opportunity Number, Competition ID, and/or Grants.gov Tracking Number.

FEMA Launches Online Debris Removal Registry

Contributed by K. Anderson (anksa@uaa.alaska.edu)

On June 1, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) launched an online Debris Contractor Registry as part of its effort to strengthen their program for the 2006 hurricane season. The new database establishes a listing of debris removal contractors that can assist communities with better planning and quicker responses to debris removal in times of disaster.

Contractors from every community in the United States will be invited to register their company in the database. According to the Congressional Advisory released June 2, 2006, the Debris Contractor Registry is an element of the U.S. Public Private Partnership (USP3). It represents a pilot program of the National Emergency Resource Registry that will develop as the overall program grows.

Debris removal contractors nationwide are now able to sign up and describe their equipment and other resources, so that state and local officials can find what they need. In order to register their business, contractors can simply log on to the website at https://65.207.63.84/usp3_nerr/default.aspx and follow the instructions.

As of June 30, local emergency managers and government officials should be able to search the database to identify and contact debris removal contractor resources, using their own procurement processes for contracting with listed vendors. FEMA does not contract with businesses for debris removal services. Contracts for these services, under presidential disaster declarations, are entered into by state and local governments, tribal authorities, and eligible private nonprofit organizations for eligible work. The FEMA Public Assistance Program may then reimburse eligible applicants for work completed by contractors.

Full text for the Congressional Advisory, Debris Registry Directions, and the Letter to Contractors can be found on the PTAC website at <http://www.ptacalaska.org> under "What's New." Contact your local PTAC office for assistance registering.

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PTAC Library Resources

Contributed by Diana Wilson (andmw@uaa.alaska.edu)

PTAC offers a full complement of business and government contracting resources in libraries located in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, and Wasilla. Books on government contracting include topics such as: marketing to the government, understanding regulations, pricing and cost accounting, conducting negotiations, and much more.

There are also a number of periodicals as well, one of which is the weekly edition of The Plans Room Members Report. The Plans Room Members Report contains a five-week activity list of new government job listings for construction and non-construction bids, as well as bid results. Other periodicals include the Alaska Business Monthly and the Alaska Journal of Commerce. These libraries are also furnished with computers connected to the Internet, and TV and VCR equipment for viewing business-related videos.

Some materials in Anchorage may be checked-out using a current library card or driver's license; checkout policies in other locations may vary. Some materials may be loaned for up to 3 weeks. Typical hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm (unless otherwise noted). For more specific library material, location information, or checkout policies, please contact Diana Wilson at 907-274-7232.

Wage Determinations OnLine

Contributed by Wesley Dalton (fswrd1@uaf.edu)

The website, Wage Determination OnLine.gov at <http://www.wdol.gov>, is available to contracting officers, vendors and the general public to determine the required wage determinations for any federal solicitation. This site is especially useful for federal solicitations which may have the Davis-Bacon clause incorporated by reference. It is also a great resource for those in need of Wage Determination (WD) information for Service Contract Act and Davis-Bacon Act official contract action.

This site also has other great links such as the "e98" website from the Department of Labor (DOL). This link allows contracting officers to contact the DOL directly for any wage determination on any official contract. To find other useful information on this site, click on labeled links on the main web page. This gives the user the ability to look up archived WDs; WDs to be revised; lists of agency labor advisors; and a library of other related links.

This online site is a must-have resource for all those involved in the government contracting business.